

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

March 24

2019

**Editor's Note:** Donnie Rader will be with us April 7-12. I commend the following article he wrote. Plan to attend the meeting and invite others to come and hear God's word proclaimed. (JH)



## Was Saul Saved On The Road To Damascus?

A very popular concept among religious people is that Saul of Tarsus was saved on the road to Damascus. The argument is that he was saved by faith on the road before he reached Damascus where he was baptized.

### Some Of The Arguments

1. Saul was a brother in Christ before baptism. One of the arguments that our friends make is that Ananias called Saul "Brother Saul" (Acts 22:13), thus he was a brother in the Lord before he was baptized. However, "brother" does not always mean a brother in Christ, but one who is a kinsman. Peter called murderers "brethren" before they repented (Acts 2:29; 3:14, 17). Stephen called the mob that stoned him "brethren" (Acts 7:2).

2. Saul was born again out of due time when he saw the Lord (1 Cor. 15:8), thus saved on the road. Look closely at this text:

*"Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time."*

It doesn't say that he was born again or even that he was born. It

says, "as by one born out of due time". The text is not talking about his salvation, but his being a witness of the resurrected Lord. He saw the Lord, as one who was born out of due time.

3. God would not appear to a sinner calling him to be an apostle and preach. Hence, the argument says that Saul was saved when God appeared to him.

If this argument proves anything it proves that Saul was saved before faith. For, the Lord appeared to him before he believed on the Lord. It would also prove salvation before and without repentance for he had not repented when the Lord appeared to him. If God could choose Jeremiah before his birth (Jeremiah 1:5), why not Saul before his spiritual birth?

Other arguments are made that we do not have space to develop and answer. However, in answering any of these arguments, we must remember that whatever conclusion we draw must harmonize with what Acts 9 and other texts say about Saul's conversion (Acts 22; 26).

### If Saul Was Saved On The Road To Damascus

If Saul was saved on the road, as the claim is made, the following are consequences of that conclusion.

1. Sins were not washed away. For, Ananias said, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). He was commanded to be baptized to wash away his sins. That was in Damascus. Thus, if he was saved on the road before reaching Damascus, he was saved while still in his sins.

2. He was the most miserable saved man. For three days he was blind and didn't eat or drink anything (Acts 9:9). That is a far cry from the story of the Ethiopian treasurer who immediately went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39).

3. The Lord didn't know it. If he was saved, the Lord didn't know it for he told Saul to go into the city and he would be told what to do (Acts 9:6).

4. Ananias didn't know it. If he was saved on the road, Ananias,

the preacher that God sent, didn't know it, for he told him to be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts 22:16).

5. Saul didn't know it. If he was saved on the road, Saul himself didn't know it for he did exactly what Ananias had commanded (Acts 22:16).

Thus, those who know that Saul was saved on the road, know something that Ananias, Saul and God himself didn't know.

### What Did Saul Do To Be Saved?

Saul did what every other convert to the Lord did, or else God would be a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11).

Thus, if others had to repent and be baptized (and they did, Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12, 38) Saul did too.

1. Believed on the Lord. The fact that he went into the city as the Lord instructed him (Acts 22:11) tells us that. Furthermore, we find him preaching that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20). Thus, he believed as the Lord commanded in the great commission (Mark 16:16).

2. Repented of his sins. This is evidenced by his fasting and prayer when he arrived in Damascus (Acts 9:9, 11).

3. He was baptized. He was told to be baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). He immediately was baptized (Acts 9:9).

Since confession of faith is essential according to Romans 10:9-10, we know he confessed his faith in the Lord as the Eunuch did (Acts 8:37). *✍ Donnie V. Rader*



## HEDONISTIC SOCIETY CONSUMES ITSELF

While psychiatrists have suggested many reasons as to why crime is increasing and violent crimes have escalated above all others, it appears to me that common sense about man's behavior gives a

sensible answer – an hedonistic society will attack and consume itself.

This kind of society frustrates its populace. On the one hand, the hedonist is frustrated because something or someone is standing in the way of his selfish pleasure. Because he conceives that drugs, possessions, promiscuity, etc., will make him happy, he cares not about how his acquisitions affect others. His attitude is, ***"Give me what I want, or I will take it."*** On the other hand, caring people are frustrated by that attitude and behavior. One's personal property, self-respect and privacy are frequently violated by the hedonist. It is not surprising that a person who, ordinarily, would never commit an act of violence, will take up arms to defend himself and protect his property – it seems to him that he has no choice. Furthermore, if a judicial system is so inefficient in its punishment of crime that it does not cause the hedonist to fear the consequences of self-gratification in violation of others' rights, it will not restrict his selfish behavior.

So, what's the answer? -- a Savior who died to save others. And those who are saved model themselves after their Savior and understand that true happiness comes from being right with God (Romans 1:16; Philippians 2:5-30; et.al.). All other attempts to change society are like trying to dam up a creek with a three-strand, barbed-wire fence. *✍ Jim R. Everett*

**Belleville church of Christ**  
5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258  
[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

**Schedule of Services**

Sunday Bible Study . . . . .	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship . . . . .	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship . . . . .	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study . . . . .	7:00 p.m.

**Evangelist**

James Hahn . . . . .	(317) 443-1938
----------------------	----------------